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ABSTRACT

A professional writing course can be both technical and humanistic by incorporating into the course a formal report assignment in which students pick a subject in the humanities about which they wish to know more. Once the students decide on topics to research, they develop a scenario in which they define a person or group who needs the information to guide their decision-making processes. After the topic is researched, students are asked to present their findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the fictional client in the form of a formal business report. By being forced to clearly define a rhetorical situation that is task-oriented rather than entirely speculative or theoretical, the students have a much clearer sense of how to select and arrange the information they have gathered. Regardless of how fictional the scenarios might be, they make plausible connections between the world of business and the study of the humanities, thus gaining a better understanding of the relationship between economic decisions and human values. (HOD)

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Kathleen Kelly
July 7, 1982

Penn State Conference
on Rhetoric and Composition

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Business Writing and the Humanities: Having It Both Ways

My ambition for today's talk is fairly modest. I simply want to explain a particular writing assignment I've used that I believe successfully meets the objectives both of a humanities course and of a business or professional writing course. But before I do that I will need to define what humanities and professional writing courses are, and that ambition is not so modest. Each has been described definitively neither in theory nor in practice.

I begin with a premise stated succinctly by Alfred North Whitehead:

> The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical.[1]

This does not, of course, mean that there cannot be a dominant emphasis on either the liberal, the technical, or the scientific. As Whitehead explains,

> The problem of education is to retain the dominant emphasis, whether literary, scientific or technical, and without loss of co-ordination to infuse into each way of education something of the other two.[2]

Since I teach humanities in a college of management, my particular concern is to insure that the technical education given there gets infused with something from the humanities. Right now my college attempts to insure this infusion through the common administrative device of distribution requirements:

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all students are required to take three social science courses and three humanities courses. But regardless of whether a technical college uses distribution requirements, or required courses, or sequenced or combined courses, or a core curriculum,[3] the squeeze on the humanities courses in a technical college is always, I suspect, very tight, and will remain so as long as technical information and expertise continues to change and grow. Even liberal arts colleges, which theoretically do not endure pressures from professions, more and more frequently have professional programs--in business, nursing, education, journalism, and so forth.

Yet one of the pressures professions are putting on the college may appear to be a boon to the humanities. Professions want our graduates to write better. Writing has traditionally been the province of the humanities, and of English departments in particular. Does this mean professions want our graduates to have a stronger humanities component, more courses in literature, history, or philosophy? Alas, the more likely response is a required technical writing course. The question is, does this course belong within the humanities distribution requirements, ultimately replacing a course in literature, history, philosophy, or art? Or is the course essentially preprofessional and therefore belonging to the technical curriculum? While many schools have already answered this question in a <u>de facto</u> way, here I would like to try to arrive at an answer by looking theoretically at

what liberal arts (the humanities in particular) and professional writing courses entail.

When we begin to try to describe the domains of the technical curriculum and the humanities, what seems initially to be a given is that, whatever else they are, they don't mix. Liberal education, of which the humanities is a subset, is often defined primarily by its opposition to technical training. As Whitehead points out, while Plato defined the ideal of a liberal education that cultivated freedom of thought, it was conceived of as the privilege of an aristocratic class which had no need to concern itself with technical work:

> An evil side of the Platonic culture has been its total neglect of technical education as an ingredient in the complete development of ideal human beings. This neglect has arisen from two disastrous antitheses, namely, that between mind and body, and that between thought and action. . . .They [the Greeks] had ... that perverted sense of values which is the nemesis of slave-owning.[4]

Of course, as Whitehead demonstrates, the Platonic ideals led to the idea of individual freedom which eventually ended slavery; nevertheless, theoretically, a liberal education does not concern itself with practical work.

And when we move to what technical professions sometimes think of the humanities, and in particular of the kind of writing instruction given by English departments,we may also assume that technical workers feel their education does not concern itself with the humanities. I am reminded of an advertisement I ran across for a business writing program called Power Writing. It made much of the fact that this program was going to teach you how to write the kind of writing used in

the world of work, not the kind of writing required in college. "Sign up for a college writing course and what do you get?" the ad said. "Talk about poetry and flowery writing by a teacher who probably never worked a day in his life!"

But certainly this emphasis on the opposition between the humanities and a technical education can be taken too far. To quote the Report of the Commision on the Humanities:

> Preprofessionalism has had severe effects on undergraduate life and learning. More disturbing are the effects that preprofessionalism may have on the standards of professionalism itself. Doctors, lawyers, and businessmen and women who pass over the liberal arts in a premature quest for expertise are not likely to be better professionals. Indeed they will probably be less capable than colleagues whose professional training rests, in Dr. /Lewis/ Thomas's words, on "the bedrock of knowledge about our civilization."[5]

And a look at the history of the humanities since Cicero and Quintilian first used the word humanitas to "mark off those activities of man by which he is most completely dinstinguished from the animals,"[6] shows that a humanistic education has always had a practical goal. The philosopher Max Black argues that the humanities have "always been both elitist and vocational, serving in fact, whether in Greece, Rome, Renaissance Italy or Victorian England, the special interest of a governing class or their clerks."[7]

By trying to define the humanities by way of their opposition to the technical or scientific, we fall into a common trap. Historically they have been defined primarily in opposition to theology and scholasticism in the Renaissaince, and to science and technology in the 19th and 20th centuries. But, as

Black argues, "contrary to popular belief, there never has been a Golden Age of humanistic education. The task is not so much to 'save' the Humanities as to create them."[8]

Attempts to define what the humanities are in themselves rather than in opposition to something else has led thinkers to focus either on the perspective peculiar to the humanities, or its language, or its logic.[9] But to my mind R. S. Crane makes the most useful distinctions between science, the social sciences, and the humanities. Crane takes as his starting point the original Ciceronian definition of the humanities as the study of that which makes us most distinctively human. He sees the sciences as concerned not with what is distinctively human but with what is most general in the natural world, with physical laws. And the social sciences are concerned with what is most generalizable in the human world, with social necessities. But the humanities are concered with

> the things which we cannot predict, in any scientific way, that men individually or in groups will do, but which, when they are done, we recognize as signs, not of any natural or social necessities, but of possibilities inherent in man's peculiar nature. They are, in short, what we commonly speak of as human achievements--whether in sciences, in institutions, or in the arts. And, more especially, they are those human achievements, like Newtonian or modern physics, the American Constitution, or Shakespearean tragedy, to which we agree in attributing that kind of unprecedented excellence that calls forth wonder as well as admiration.[10]

The humanities, according to Crane, may make use of factual and descriptive arts, but they themselves are normative arts, concerned with human values. Crane identifies the humanties not with particular subjects, but with humanistic techniques

applied to subjects, and these he identifies as the four arts of linguistics, the analysis of ideas, literary and artistic criticism, and historiography. Finally, although he has said that the humanities don't define any particular subject matter, nevertheless the four arts of the humanities

> are pertinent in varying degrees to all the subject matters with which humanists commonly deal /language, philosophy, literature and the arts, history/; they thus cut across the boundaries dividing the subject matters from one another; and it is precisely the convergence of all of them upon any subject matter that makes it, in the completest degree, humanistic.[11]

Then, according to this definition, can a professional writing course qualify as a humanities course, and to what degree?

To help answer that question I turn to a recent College English article in which Ruth Mitchell argues with consummate good sense that teaching professional writing must be the shared responsibility of both the humanities and professional programs.[12] To make her case, she defines technical writing not as is traditionally the case, according to what is written about, but according to its function. (See Table I - handout.) Using the criteria of function, she first divides literary writing--novels, poetry, and literary essays--from practical writing which earns its living. Business writing, student writing, and technical writing, all must be written and read; we do not choose to write in these genres as we may in the literary genres. (Journalism and advertising, because they are written by necessity but read by choice, fall in between the division.)

Mitchell's definitions of business and student writing aren't terribly satisfying, but when she begins to make distinctions amongst the types of technical writing, her taxonomy becomes most helpful in deciding what belongs in the domain of English departments and what doesn't. Using a very pragmatic approach, she argues that English departments should teach the kind of writing that rhetorical training qualifies them to teach. And the way she classifies various kinds of technical writing demonstrates precisely where the rhetoric enters technical writing.

Mitchell divides technical writing into three subclasses (see Table 2), according to the audience and its relation to the writer. Briefly, in subclass one the audience consists of peers who need to know technical information about an object or process. This is hard-core technical writing or, as she calls it, "technical writing as advertised." The object or process dictates the structure of the writing and there is no room for rhetoric. In the world of computers, for example, this would be the kind of writing involved in writing up documentation. Writing it well primarily means understanding the system. This writing can only be evaluated by a technician.

In subclass two, "how-to" writing, an audience of non-peers or non-experts needs to understand an object or process in order to use it. To continue the example of the computer world, this would be the writing required in a user's manual for a

computer. According to Mitchell, English teachers may help here to teach the writer how to provide the context the non-expert needs, to avoid jargon, and to use "reliable terminology and repetition"(550). But a technician must make sure the procedures are described accurately. This sort of writing must be taught by both a technician and the English teacher, though as Mitchell says, technical writing courses in English departments chiefly teach this kind of writing.

Finally, subclass three Mitchell calls writing for decisionmakers, and here I think we have what is the heart of a solid business writing course. "Writing for decisionmakers communicates specialized knowledge to administrators who need the information to make informed decisions" (550). This involves distilling "specialized knowledge to the point where it can be judged by logic alone" (552). Typically the writer has done research in his specialty but only the results of this extensive research must be presented, and presented in an arrangement in which the alternatives for a decision to act are clear, and the consequences of each alternative spelled out. As Mitchell says, these writers "must now expand their jargon, explain methods, and reorder their communications for a different audience" (552). This is writing the teacher trained in English and rhetoric is qualified to teach.

While I'm sure Crane's definition of the humanities and Mitchell's of technical writing might be refined, I think they give us an adequate working definition against which to judge just how well courses in writing might meet a humanities requirement and a business or professional writing requirement. To sum up, a humanities course focuses on developing in varying degrees the four arts of: linguistics, the analysis of ideas, literary and artistic criticism, and historiography; and it is concerned with questions of human values and norms. A professional writing course develops abilities to accurately represent a subject in words, and to present specialized information to a non-specialized (though expert) audience who must make a decision about policy.

Clearly the study of writing is the study of language and thus belongs to some exent to the humanities. Nevertheless, as Mitchell has demonstrated, insofar as language is a subject- or rule-governed activity, as it is in hard-core technical writing, it is not humanistic. As evidence that language can be quite scientific, I cite a computerized text editing system, developed by Bell Laboratories, that can, for example rid text of run-ons and cliches. Here's what happened when it was fed the Gettysburg Address. The original opening:

> Fourscore and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

> Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

And what the computer did with it:

> Eighty-seven years ago, our grandfathers created a free nation here. They based it on the idea that everybody is created equal. We are now fighting a civil war to see if this or any similar nation can survive. On this battlefield we are dedicating a cemetery to those who died for their country. It is only right.[13]

Clearly one can deal with language in a scientific or rule-governed way quite decently as long as rhetoric is ignored. But it is when rhetorical considerations arise that we are in the realm where truths are indicated, to quote Aristotle, "roughly and in outline....[For] it is equally foolish to accept probable reasoning from a mathematician and to demand from a rhetorician scientific proofs."[14] Such rhetoric is the realm of humanities courses. But a humanities course, as we have seen from Crane, is more fully a humanities course the more it includes the arts of philosophy, aesthetics, and historiography as well as rhetoric. Thus, insofar as the subject of technical writing has little to do with exercising these arts and little to do with value judgments, to that extent technical writing courses move away from the humanities. The question arises: Can a writing course serve the two masters, humanities and the professions?

Last semester I was in the predicament of having to assume the answer was yes, a writing course could be technical and humanistic, and then figure out how it could be done. I was scheduled to teach an expository writing course that could count as one of the mere three humanities courses our students are required to take. Yet, my college is a management school that has no business writing course, and my work with business communications courses in MBA programs made it very clear to me how useful some instruction in business writing could be for our students, not only for getting a job, but for the time they are in college, writing up cases and doing research in other buisness courses.

To answer the need both for a solid humanities course and for business writing, I designed into the heart of the course a formal report assignment in which students were asked to pick a subject in the humanities they were interested in knowing more about. They were to explore the subject for a while and when they had decided more specifically what they wanted to do research on, they were to develop a scenario. The scenario must define a person or group who needs the information they are finding out in order to make a decision. They were to consider themselves the consultant to this person or group. (See the attached assignment sheet for examples I offered.) In most cases the decision to be made was going to have economic consequences, but before the client could make

an intelligent business decision, he or she had to understand better some dimension of human values: nature, art, or concept of self.

Once I had checked out their scenarios, students continued research and presented their findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the client in the form of a formal business report. We spent some time in class discussing the functions of the various features of the report--letter of transmittal, abstract, headings and subheadings, lists, bullets, exhibits, and appendices. We also looked at sample business reports and worked on a couple of short recommendation memos.

The results were a pleasure to work with as perhaps the following list of report projects will testify:

> A report to "Scholastic Travel" recommending the four Gothic Cathedrals that should be included in a student tour of Europe, and why.
>
> A report to the Massachusetts House Appropriations Committee to convince them of the viability of housing a Shakespeare Repertory Group in Worcester Mechanic's Hall. The report analyzes the elements of Shakespeare's play The Tempest, to show why it should be popular with modern audiences.
>
> A report to the International Olympic Committee which will be holding the next Olympics in Greece. The report compares ancient Greek architectural styles in order to recommend which style the committee should use as a model for designing the proposed ceremonial arena.
>
> A report to a third world leader comparing the 18th century industrial revolution in England with modern industrialization, in order to demonstrate why England cannot be taken as a model .

A report to a history teacher recommending how Napolean should be taught--as a hero or a villain?

A report to the President's advisory board arguing that the government budget should not increase funding for the sciences at the expense of the arts, that humans need both the sciences and the arts for fulfillment.

A report to the chairman of the Democratic National Party suggesting what strategy can be learned from a comparison of their 1984 situation with that of the democrats in the election of 1936.

A report to President Reagan attempting to explain Russian intentions on the basis of Marxist-Leninist theories.

A report to the curator of Painting at the Metropolitan Museum recommending which paintings by David and Goya should be included in their upcoming exhibit on the political artist.

As you can see, what this assignment does is quite simple. Instead of asking students to write an imitation professional journal article in the humanities, I've had them write an imitation professional business report in the humanities.

The humanist might object to this assignment, arguing that students must be distracted from giving full attention to their subject because they are only looking for information useful to their hypothetical client. And I admit that I had to steer students away from choosing a simple subject just because the scenario would be easy to invent, rather than making the scenario serve the subject. They needed a good bit of help devising scenarios.

But what may be the major problem with the assignment turns out, I think, to be its greatest asset. For by being

forced to clearly define a rhetorical situation that is task-oriented rather than entirely speculative or theoretical, my students had a much clearer sense of how to select and arrange the information they had gathered, so that it could be used by a reader. This did not mean they did less justice to the subject matter. Typically, their rough drafts attempted to organize the report around the subject matter rather than the reader's needs, simply so that they could get a handle on what they had found out. But revisions then focused on selecting and arranging information, and stating criteria, in order that someone could readily see what was relevant to the decision.

The technician, on the other hand, might object that the report-writing skills learned here would not be transferable, that such fictional scenarios do not imitate the professional report. While I cannot prove that such skills as they learned are transferrable, I can say that I found these students working through exactly the same difficulties my MBA students have in putting together a business report. They must learn how to set up their problem so that the recommendations do indeed answer the problem as they have defined it, how to highlight the most significant items, to see the value of redundancies among the abstract, the introduction, conclusions, and recommendations, and so forth. Such are the techniques that go into

distilling technical knowledge for decisionmakers, the essence of the kind of writing Ruth Mitchell argues that English teachers are most qualified to teach.

And once again what at first seems to be a problem may be an asset. For however fictional these scenarios are, they do make plausible connections between the world of business and the study of the humanities, often forcing students to dwell on the relation between economic decisions and human values.

While the formal business report is the only direct link between the humanities and professional writing I experimented with, it seems to me the same principle might easily be extended to the other standard forms in business writing. I can imagine letter assignments, job applications, and resumes, for example, in which students are asked to play the role of various fictional or historical characters. (Nancy Comley and Robert Scholes's text, and their talk at last Spring's 4C's Convention, suggest that just such interpolation of literary texts reveals much about what students understand in what they read.) And principles of communication can be demonstrated using literary texts as well.

What I am suggesting here is not that there is nothing so special about professional writing that it cannot easily be absorbed by the humanities. Nor am I saying that all humanities courses can be done justice by having students writing in business forms. Regardless of how much I would like the students at my college to spend more time with the humanities, I recognize that time and attention must be paid to their professional

writing needs. But I am suggesting that opportunities can be created in already existing courses to answer professional writing needs, opportunities which demonstrate, as Whitehead has said, that "the antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical."

NOTES

[1]Alfred North Whitehead, "Technical Education and Science and Literature," in the Aims of Education and Other Essays (1929; reprint, New York: MacMillan, 1967), p. 48.

[2]Whitehead, p. 54.

[3]For a broad discussion of curriculum possibilities, see Gordon F. Vars, "Designs for General Education: Alternative Approaches to Curriculum Integration," Journal of Higher Education, 53 (March/April, 1982), 216-226.

[4]Whitehead, p. 50.

[5]The Humanities in American Life, Report of the Commission on the Humanities (Berkeley: U. of CA Press, 1980), p. 82.

[6]R. S. Crane, The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays Critical and Historical, vol. 1 (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 167.

[7]Max Black, "Some Tasks for 'the Humanities'," in The Sciences, the Humanities and the Technological Threat, ed. W. Roy Niblett (London: U. of London Press, 1975), p. 80.

[8]Black, p. 80.

[9]For perspectives, see Black; for language, see W. T. Jones, The Sciences and the Humanities (1965); for logic, see H. B. Veatch, Two Logics: The Conflict Between Classical and Neo-Analytic Philosophy (1969). For a good review essay, see the Brittanica's essay on the Humanities in the Macropaedia.

[10]Crane, p. 8.

[11]Crane, p. 10.

[12]Ruth Mitchell, "Shared Responsibility: Teaching Technical Writing in the University," CE 43 (1981), 543-555.

[13]Discover magazine gave the computer the Gettysburg Address, as cited by Journal of Community Communication, IV, 3, p. 39.

[14]From the "Nichomachaen Ethics" in The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), p. 936.

Toward a Definition of the Liberal Arts and/or the Humanities:

1. The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical

   The problem of education is to retain the dominant emphasis, whether literary, scientific or technical, and without loss of co-ordination to infuse into each way of education something of the other two.

   An evil side of the Platonic culture has been its total neglect of technical education as an ingredient in the complete development of ideal human beings. This neglect has arisen from two disastrous antitheses, namely, that between mind and body, and that between thought and action. . . .They [the Greeks] had. . .that perverted sense of values which is the nemesis of slave-owning.

   --Alfred North Whitehead, "Technical Education and Science and Literature," in The Aims of Education and Other Essays (1929; reprint, New York: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 48, 54, 50.

2. Contrary to popular belief, there never has been a Golden Age of humanistic education. The task is not so much to 'save' the Humanities as to create them.

   --Max Black, "Some Tasks for 'the Humanities'," in The Sciences, the Humanities and the Technological Threat (London: U. of London Press, 1975), p. 80.

3. What are the aspects of human experience that distinguish men most completely, now and in the past, from the animals? . . .They are the things which we cannot predict, in any scientific way, that men individually or in groups will do, but which, when they are done, we recognize as signs, not of any natural or social necessities, but of possibilities inherent in man's peculiar nature. They are, in short, what we commonly speak of as human achievements--whether in sciences, in institutions, or in the arts. And, more especially, they are those human achievements, like Newtonian or modern physics, the American Constitution, or Shakespearean tragedy, to which we agree in attributing that kind of unprecedented excellence that calls forth wonder as well as admiration.

   Linguistics, the analysis of ideas, literary and artistic criticism, and historiography--these are the four constituent elements of the humanities when the humanities are defined in terms of the "good arts" which their successful cultivation presupposes.

   --R. S. Crane, The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays Critical and Historical, vol. 1,(Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 8.

4. For other helpful discussions, see:

P. H. Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," in Philosophical Analysis and Education, ed. R. D. Archambault (London: Routledge, & Kegan, Paul, 1965).

Charles Wegener, Liberal Education and the Modern University (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1980).

The Encyclopaedia Brittanica: Macropaedia has a very good essay discussing the issues involved.

Toward a Definition of Professional Writing--tables from Ruth Mitchell, "Shared Responsibility: Teaching Technical Writing in the University," CE 43 (1981), 543-555.

TABLE 1

PRACTICAL WRITING AND LITERARY WRITING

Practical writing	Belles-lettres
business writing, secretarial	novels
business writing, administrative	plays
student papers	poetry
technical writing:	literary essays (including scholarly articles)
technical writing as advertised	scripts for radio, television, and movies
journal articles	
instructions	
formal documents	
writing for decisionmakers	
legal briefs, memos, and decisions	

TABLE 2

THREE SUBCLASSES OF TECHNICAL WRITING

Subclass 1

Technical writing as advertised; journal articles

parameter: fidelity to described object or process
audience: peer users, customers, colleagues
rhetoric (scope of choice): absent--language a necessary nuisance
motivation for polished writing: absent

Subclass 2

Instructions; "how to" writing; formal documents

parameter: reader's ability to perform operation
audience: nonpeer users and customers
rhetoric (scope of choice): present to the degree it serves utility
motivation for polished writing: conditionally present

Subclass 3

Writing for decisionmakers; legal briefs, memos and decisions

parameter: reader's understanding of the problem, the solution (if any), the possibilities, the caveats
audience: decisionmakers, equal in education level, but not sharing specialty
rhetoric (scope of choice): omnipresent
motivation for polished writing: strong

Formal Business Report

The Assignment

Since Expository Writing is a humanities course but I want you to learn the standard business report, this assignment asks you to do research in the humanities but to present the results of your research in the form of a business report. You are to consider yourself a consultant writing a report upon which your client will have to act. You will pick the topic you want to investigate, then define the client/consultant scenario in which your report will mean something

The topic is up to you. You can begin either with a good, intellectually engaging, and challenging book, or with a topic you want to investigate. In any case the subject must be in the humanities: literature, philosophy, art, or history. To find a good book, I suggest you look through the Book Review sections of the Sunday New York Times for a 6-8 week period, to stimulate your curiosity about topics and to help find a good book.

Or begin with a topic. Now is the time for you to find out more about Freud, Expressionism, Shakespeare, Gothic Cathedrals, Michelangelo, Russian prison camps, Darwin, Kafka, Feminism, the Reconstruction - things you always wanted to know more about but were afraid to ask. Go to the Brittanica, look up the topic and read the article; then use the bibliography at the end of the article as a starting place for your reading.

Note: the Babson library does not have a great collection in the humanities. Plan to go to the Brandeis and Wellesley College libraries and to use Interlibrary Loan. This all takes time, so pick your topic or the book you are starting out with soon.

Once you've gotten into the reading, start to imagine what kind of client would find what you're learning useful for decision-making. For example:

1. (You're reading John McPhee's Encounters with the Archdruid and Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire.) You work for Interior Secretary James Watt. He's just come back after only 3 days of a 7 day wilderness trip up the Snake River. He left early because, he said, he got bored. He can't understand why anyone would want to preserve Wilderness areas when these areas could be made to produce money. He assigns you to help him understand his opposition. Your job: Explain to Watt what people get out of Wilderness areas that makes it worth the millions they cost to preserve.

2. (You're reading Kenneth Clark's art history book, The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form.) You work for a multi-millionaire who has decided to invest in art. Since he wants to start by establishing some kind of expertise in one area of art, he has decided to collect nudes. The only trouble is, as he frankly admits, he can't see amy more value in a nude by

Titian or Michelangelo than those in the pin-up calendars selling so briskly on college campuses these days. Your job: make some recommendations to him about where he should begin this collection and why. (Money is not relevant; your boss is very rich and is only interested in having valuable paintings that he can eventually appreciate.)

3. (You're reading Barbara Berg's The Remembered Gate: Origins of American Feminism 1800-1860). You work for a successful New York City banker who is so sure that no woman could possibly want to oppose ERA, she has just invested thousands in ERA Victory T-Shirts to sell to American housewives. Advisors have told her, however, that she is going to lose her shirts. She doesn't understand. Write a report explaining the cultural conditioning American women have undergone since the early 1800's which makes it difficult for some women to recognize that ERA can do them a lot of good.

Once you've got the scenario well-defined, continue your research until you've got enough information for a first-rate report. Then write the report.

Schedule of Events

The report will involve you're writing a 2-3 page proposal and a 5-15 page report, and presenting a 5-minute oral briefing to the class in which you summarize the most cogent aspects of your research.

1. The Proposal. (due on or before 3/12)
In memo form addressed to Prof. Kathleen Kelly, the proposal should

--briefly explain what research you have done thus far and why it interests you,

--define the scenario within which you intend to write your report, and

--present your plans for doing further research. What are the main questions you need to answer and where will you look for the information?

The purpose of this proposal is to help you define your research early, and to help me see what direction you're headed in and whether I can offer any help. It needn't be long. It should be clear and coherent. It will be graded as a class exercise.

2. The Written Formal Report (draft due 4/7, final due 4/16)
The written formal report should include the appropriate features of the standard business report as explained in Writing for Decision Makers, chapter 8 and the hand-out,

"The Formal Business Report." The report will be graded on how well it presents

--careful and intellectually challenging research,
--a rhetorically effective argument, and
--writing that is clear and coherent.

3. The Oral Briefing (somtime during the last two weeks of the term)
What this entails will be explained later in the term. Your speech will be graded on the quality of its composition, that is, its clarity and rhetorical effectiveness. The delivery itself is simply to give you some good practice; it will not be graded.

SAMPLE STUDENT REPORT TOPICS

A report to "Scholastic Travel" recommending the four Gothic Cathedrals that should be included in a student tour of Europe, and why.

A report to the Massachusetts House Appropriations Committee to convince them of the viability of housing a Shakespeare Reperatory Group in Worcester Mechanic's Hall. The report analyzes the elements of Shakespeare's play The Tempest, to show why it should be popular with modern audiences.

A report to the International Olympic Committee which will be holding the next Olympics in Greece. The report compares ancient Greek architectural styles in order to recommend which style the committee should use as a model for designing the proposed ceremonial arena.

A report to a third world leader comparing the 18th century industrial revolution in England with modern industrialization, in order to demonstrate why England cannot be taken as a model.

A report to a history teacher recommending how Napolean should be taught--as a hero or a villain?

A report to the President's advisory board arguing that the government budget should not increase funding for the sciences at the expense of the arts, that humans need both the sciences and the arts for fulfillment.

A report to the chairman of the Democratic national party suggesting what strategy can be learned from a comparison of their 1984 situation with that of the democrats in the election of 1936.

A report to President Reagan attempting to explain Russian intentions on the basis of Marxist-Leninist theories.

A report to the curator of Painting at the Metropolitan Museum recommending which paintings by David and Goya should be included in their upcoming exhibit on the political artist.